THE NEWCASTLE AND NORTH OF ENGLAND LAW SOCIETY

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS

SPACE LAW

ANNUAL LECTURE, 2026

Thursday 26th November – 5:30pm to 8:00pm

As part of our Bicentenary Year and our commitment to Honour the Past : Prepare for the Future we are looking beyond the conventional areas of legal practice to explore one of the most exciting and rapidly evolving new areas of law.

Space is no longer the preserve of Governments and astronauts. The North East is emerging as an important region for the Space Sector and the Space supply chain. New legal questions are developing around regulation, governance, international relations, cyber security, AI and the responsible use of Space.

Bringing together leading voices from academia, industry and the legal profession, this special Annual Lecture during our Bicentennial Year will explore the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of space exploration and Space law and what they could mean for the lawyers of the future in our Region.

Programme

5:30pm - Arrival and light refreshments

6:00pm - Welcome by **Lesley Fairclough**, Partner Built Environment & Head of Housing at Ward Hadaway & President, The Newcastle and North of England Law Society

6:10pm - **Professor Chris Newman**, Professor of Space Law and Policy, Northumbria University

6:30pm - Panel Discussion and Q&A with **Ben Shaw, Professor Chris Newman, Dr J. Lauren Napier** and **Tom Justice** facilitated by **David Eagleson**.

7:30pm - Closing remarks by Lesley Fairclough

7:35pm - Networking

VENUE

Northumbria University
City Campus East
CCE1 003 - Ground Floor
NE2 1XA

Space Law Presenters

PROFESSOR CHRIS NEWMAN, PROFESSOR OF SPACE LAW AND POLICY, NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

‘Governing beyond the Pale Blue Dot: What happens when jurisdiction leaves the planet’

Two hundred years of this Society's work has concerned law anchored to territory. The next two hundred will be harder to contain. The UK already licenses satellites and asserts jurisdiction over hardware hundreds of kilometres above Newcastle. Space will only get busier as humans return to the Moon and commercial stations begin carrying occupants. Borrowing Carl Sagan's pale blue dot, Professor Christopher Newman asks how terrestrial legal systems govern conduct they can neither see nor police: orbital debris, satellites manoeuvring uncomfortably close to one another, and the coming argument over lunar resources.

BEN SHAW, HEAD OF OPERATIONS & CAPTURE, SPACE AT LOCKHEED MARTIN

Ben is currently completing a part-time Master’s degree in Space Law at Northumbria University alongside his role with Lockheed Martin Space. He has more than 28 years’ experience across the defence, aerospace and space industries and has played a key role in establishing Lockheed Martin Space in the North East. Alongside Professor John Woodward of Northumbria University, Ben helped develop the North East Space Skills & Technology Centre (NESST).

Prior to his career in industry, Ben served for six years in the British Army and holds an MBA from Imperial College London and a joint BA (Hons) in History and Politics from the University of Hull.

DR J. LAUREN NAPIER, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN LAW, NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

Dr. J. Lauren is an Assistant Professor in Law at Northumbria University, specialising in space law and governance, with a focus on Low Earth Orbit and Lunar activities. She has over a decade of experience in the space sector, including representing INGOs and the UK at the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees. Lauren has also advised Ofcom and North East England space stakeholders on spectrum management, active debris removal, cybersecurity and AI.

TOM JUSTICE, PARTNER, MUCKLE LLP

Tom Justice is a Partner at Muckle LLP, specialising in commercial law and intellectual property. As the North East’s space sector continues to develop, Tom has a growing interest in the legal and commercial challenges facing businesses entering and supplying this market. His experience working with technology-led and manufacturing businesses gives him a practical understanding of the issues that can arise when established businesses apply their skills, products and technology to a new and highly regulated sector such as space.

DAVID EAGLESON, SPACE LAW PHD CANDIDATE AT NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

David Eagleson is a PhD researcher at Northumbria University specialising in space debris and Active Debris Removal (ADR). He holds an LL.M. in Air and Space Law from Leiden University and has worked in the UK space sector on ADR and On-Orbit Servicing. He regularly contributes to international space law and policy discussions, presents at international conferences, and serves as Rapporteur of the IISL Space Traffic Management Working Group. In 2024, he received the IISL’s Diederiks-Verschoor Award for outstanding research by an early-career scholar.